

**QUERCUS GARRYANA - (FRAXINUS LATIFOLIA) /  
SYMPHORICARPOS ALBUS**

Oregon white oak - (Oregon ash) / common snowberry  
Abbreviated Name: QUGA-(FRLA)/SYAL

Sample size = 21 plots

**DISTRIBUTION:** Occurs only in the southern half of the Puget Trough, including Pierce, Thurston, Grays Harbor, Lewis, Cowlitz, and Clark counties. Also occurs in Willamette and Umpqua valleys, Oregon.

**GLOBAL/STATE STATUS:** G2S2. There are only 6 known relatively high-quality occurrences and probably less than 20 occurrences total in existence in Washington. Most examples have been degraded by non-native species or development. Threats include succession, development/conversion, and non-native species.

**ID TIPS:** Dominated by Oregon white oak or co-dominated by oak and Oregon ash. Common snowberry dominates understory. Oregon ash, sword fern, or moist-site forbs (see Vegetation section) are typically present. Site is usually riparian or wetland fringe.

**ENVIRONMENT:** These sites are moderately dry to moderately moist and appear to be relatively nutrient-rich. Typically occurs as a riparian strip parallel to streams or as a fringe around wetlands, and occupies a transitional area between prairies or former prairies and wetter habitats. Two plots on deep, gravel-free, loamy fine sands (Nisqually Series) were placed in this unit because of vegetative similarities, but were not associated with wetlands or streams. Some sites are probably temporarily flooded during at least some winters and all riparian and wetland sites are probably sub-irrigated. Occurs on glacial outwash plains and mixed material of glaciofluvial and sedimentary origin. These sites are relatively flat or gently sloping.

**Precipitation:** 43-65 inches (mean 48)

**Elevation:** 50-450 feet

**Aspect/slope:** All/ 0-16% slope (mean 4)

**Slope position:** plain, bottom, terrace, short

**Soil series:** Spanaway, Lacamas, McKenna, Nisqually

**Special:** riparian or wetland

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**Vegetation Composition Table (selected species):**

Con = constancy, the percent of plots within which each species was found;  
Cov = cover, the mean crown cover of the species in plots where it was found.

Trees	Kartesz 2003 Name	Con	Cov
Orgeon white oak	Quercus garryana var. garryana	100	75
Oregon ash	Fraxinus latifolia	52	22
Douglas-fir	Pseudotsuga menziesii var. menzeisii	19	11
<b>Shrubs, Subshrubs</b>			
common snowberry	Symphoricarpos albus var. laevigatus	100	58
serviceberry	Amelanchier alnifolia	90	12
Indian plum	Oemleria cerasiformis	90	10
tall Oregongrape	Mahonia aquifolium	62	3
trailing blackberry	Rubus ursinus var. macropetalus	52	5
orange honeysuckle	Lonicera ciliosa	43	3
oval-leaved viburnum	Viburnum ellipticum	19	6
beaked hazelnut	Corylus cornuta var. californica	14	21
<b>Graminoids</b>			
Kentucky bluegrass	Poa pratensis	33	4
long-stolon sedge	Carex inops ssp. inops	24	3
<b>Forbs and Ferns</b>			
cleavers	Galium aparine	52	6
sword fern	Polystichum munitum	48	4
mountain sweet-cicely	Osmorhiza berteroi	48	+
licorice fern	Polypodium glycyrrhiza	43	+
Siberian springbeauty	Claytonia siberica var. siberica	38	8
small-flowered nemophila	Nemophila parviflora var. parviflora	33	4
enchanter's nightshade	Circaea alpina ssp pacifica	29	6
starry false Solomon's-seal	Maianthemum stellatum	24	5
small-flowered trillium	Trillium parviflorum	24	+
fringecup	Tellima grandiflora	19	4
pioneer violet	Viola glabella	14	+

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Chris Chappell photo

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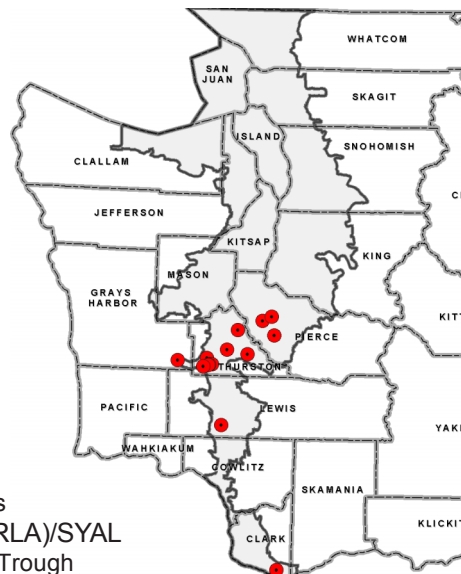
**DISTURBANCE/SUCCESSION:** If a seed source is present, Douglas-fir and Oregon ash are likely to increase in abundance over time in the absence of disturbance. In pre-Western settlement times, riparian oak communities undoubtedly burned at least occasionally, if not somewhat frequently. Because of this, their understory composition was probably different, perhaps less shrubby. Winter flooding may be an important process on some of these sites.

**VEGETATION:** Forest, or less commonly woodland, dominated by Oregon white oak, and sometimes co-dominated by Oregon ash. Douglas-fir is occasionally prominent. The understory is always dominated by a substantial layer of common snowberry. The tall shrubs serviceberry and Indian plum are usually prominent. Tall Oregon grape is usually present; beaked hazelnut is occasionally prominent. The herb layer tends to be rather sparse. Only cleavers occurs in a majority of plots. Sword fern or one of the moist-site forbs (starry false Solomon's seal, Siberian springbeauty, enchanter's nightshade, fringe cup, small-flowered trillium, pioneer violet) is usually present.

**CLASSIFICATION NOTES:** Chappell and Crawford (1997) describe same association as QUGA/SYAL/moist forb association from southern Puget Sound area.

**MANAGEMENT NOTES:** Where Douglas-fir are present or establishing, their removal should be considered for long-term maintenance of the association. The potential for increases in non-natives with ground disturbance should be weighed when making decisions about tree removal. Little is known about the effects of fire on this association.

**BIODIVERSITY NOTES:** State threatened western gray squirrel (*Sciurus griseus*) requires oak woodland in proximity to water sources and therefore this association should be prime habitat. State candidate slender-billed white-breasted nuthatch (*Sitta carolinensis aculeata*) is dependent on oak woodland habitat and formerly occurred in this association at Scatter Creek. This appears to be an important habitat for the state sensitive small-flowered trillium (*Trillium parviflorum*), where it occurs relatively frequently.



Plot locations  
of QUGA-(FRLA)/SYAL  
in the Puget Trough